

MEETING SUMMARY | May 28, 2014

Santa Rosa Plain Technical Advisory Committee

Meeting in Brief

Community Forums Update

To date, three community forums—held in Sebastopol, the Town of Windsor and Cotati/Rohnert Park respectively—have been convened and well attended with a fully engaged public. In general, the public has been highly inquisitive about the collaborative process and resulting draft groundwater management plan. Forum attendees have shared their concerns and interest in management, posed a range of questions, and offered suggestions for Panel consideration.

Review of Narrative GMP Executive Summary

The TAC discussed and refined the draft GMP Executive Summary, building on its previous work at the March and April meetings. The TAC generally supports the latest draft, yet also offered a number of minor editorial revisions and suggestions. Changes made to the Executive Summary will be made universally throughout the GMP.

Review of Overall Draft GMP

The TAC has made extensive revisions over the course of several meetings to improve each GMP chapter. Moreover, section 2 (Water Resources) was revisited and discussed at length following integration of the USGS study results, namely the outputs of the flow model for the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed. The TAC reviewed each chapter, making only minor editorial revisions and suggestions. The TAC agreed that the full draft GMP should be presented to Panel at its June meeting.

Pumping Estimates for Viticulture

One TAC member expressed concern that USGS pumping estimates for viticulture operations in the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed may be too high. The TAC offered a range of suggestions to better understand and address the issue. Project Manager Marcus Trotta noted that USGS staff could help clarify how the estimates were derived.

<http://www.scwa.gov/srgroundwater/>

Next TAC Meeting

June 25, 2014 at the Sonoma County Water Agency office, 404 Aviation Blvd, Santa Rosa.

Action Items

Timeframe	Name	Action Item
June 3	TAC Members	Submit comments on all draft GMP sections to Project Team
June	Project Team	Address questions on viticultural irrigation demands
June	Project Team	Inquire with PRMD if four tier well

		classification and 25B well standards will be updated
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Facilitator Rich Wilson opened the meeting and provided an update on the information sharing and subsequent dialogue occurring at the first three community forums. The TAC spent the remainder of the meeting refining the draft Executive Summary and identifying outstanding issues to address in each of the draft GMP chapters.

Community Forums Update

The Project Team prepared, distributed and briefly discussed a document that highlighted public feedback at the first three community forums, including concerns, information requests and other suggestions. To date, the forums—held in Sebastopol, the Town of Windsor and Cotati/Rohnert Park respectively—have been well attended with a fully engaged public. In general, the public has been highly inquisitive about the collaborative process and resulting draft groundwater management plan. Forum attendees have shared their concerns and interest in management, posed a range of questions, and offered suggestions for Panel consideration. Many have stayed afterwards to thank Panel members and the Project Team for the ongoing effort to address sustainable groundwater management in the Santa Rosa Plain watershed.

Review of Narrative GMP Executive Summary

At its March and April meetings, the TAC discussed and refined a draft GMP Executive Summary. Technical Consultant Tim Parker introduced the latest iteration, based on TAC feedback, and again described its content and structure. He noted that Panel member Pete Parkinson helped improve the draft. Also, the Basin Management Objectives (BMOs) were reorganized without eliminating any previous content, and the setting was moved up front. The TAC supports the latest draft, yet also offered a number of minor editorial revisions and suggestions. Of note, changes made to the Executive Summary will be made universally throughout the GMP.

- Explain the concept of “imbalance” in simpler terms (i.e. outflows exceed inflows)
- Make editorial improvements to the first paragraph
 - Avoid hyperbole and excessive use of adjectives
 - Watershed is “vibrant yet threatened”
- Pg. 1 – Exercise caution with sentences such as, “may lead to legal battles” (e.g. soften language but still describe that problems will occur without management and local management provides flexibility)
- Pg. 1 – “Leading to decline in habitat” is a problematic phrase
 - USGS study doesn’t use this phrase
 - Perhaps use “with associated impacts to ecosystems and habitat”
 - Problem also occurs on pg. 6
- Pg. 2 – Agriculture spelled incorrectly
- Pg. 4 – 84% changed to 82%
 - Ensure number is accurate
 - Reference pg. 73 of USGS study

- Pg. 5 – Description of water exports to geysers needs qualification
 - Consider “minor” exports to geysers
 - Clarify flow source
 - Make outflows list comprehensive (i.e. “cover all bases”)
 - Integrate within larger context
- Pg. 6 – Phrase “is lost to” is not written clearly
 - Concept needs to be clear
 - Consider replacing with “infiltrates” plus “further reducing stream flow”
 - Maybe a couple of sentences with a diagram
- Pg. 6 – third paragraph, “general results...”
 - Exercise caution with description as there is variability in model results
 - Consider a link to actual model results
- Figure – Area map showing plan area and contractors
 - Windsor border is incorrect

Review of Overall Draft GMP

The facilitator reminded the TAC of its collective efforts over several meetings to draft each of the six chapters that comprise the GMP. Extensive TAC feedback has enabled multiple revisions to each chapter. Moreover, section 2 (Water Resources) was revisited and discussed at length following integration of the USGS study results, namely the outputs of the flow model for the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed. A few TAC members cautioned against linking future management actions too closely to the USGS study given uncertainties with the model. That said, these same members acknowledged the model as a sophisticated and useful tool that will inform management. Project Manager Marcus Trotta emphasized that having a management plan that includes the USGS study will enable data collection and analysis, and thus improve groundwater management over time.

The TAC reviewed each draft chapter, noting any final issues to be addressed before presenting the full draft GMP to the Panel for consideration. Tim Parker noted that any Executive Summary revisions will be universal throughout the GMP. He also pointed out that key figures are still being updated, and that a table can be created in section 3 that briefly describes each GMP management component. The TAC expressed support for the draft GMP, and agreed that the full document should be shared with the Panel for consideration and final review at its June meeting. Some minor editorial revisions were suggested:

Section 1 – Introduction

- No feedback received

Section 2 – Water Resources

- General comment: caution against linking future management actions too closely to the USGS study given uncertainties with the model
- Question on viticulture pumping: see below

Section 3 – Current Management Efforts

- Inquire with PRMD if four tier well classification and 25B well standards will be updated
- Question: Do the counties monitor flow rates?
- Response: Flow rates are monitored for commercial use wells and wineries
- Additional response from TAC member: Agriculture is generally exempt from monitoring flow rates

Section 4 – Basin Management Objectives

- BMO 11 – Major change is new 4.3.5 subheading and addition of recharge enhancement
- TAC members generally like addition of new table
- Suggested editorial revision: ensure headings are structured the same throughout section

Section 5 – Management Components

- Subsection 5.5.1 – Recommended Actions: Soften language, “evaluate success or lack thereof” to something like “review” or “compile” key information to inform evaluation
- Section 5.7.4 – Recommended Actions #4: Consider that “develop possible adaptation measures” may go beyond the GMP scope
- Not a potential action, based on feedback from the community forums, may include hooking well owners up to municipal wells

Section 6 – Implementation

- Question: How will prioritization of management actions work?
- Response: Prioritization results in section 6 demonstrate support of the TAC and Panel. Some projects being pursued and funded by individual entities or partners will be prioritized by those entities or partners. For projects lacking current funding plans, the TAC and Panel will closely review the prioritization results table to determine if there is interest to seek funding and advance a particular project

Pumping Estimates for Viticulture

One TAC member expressed concern that USGS pumping estimates for viticulture operations in the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed may be too high. The TAC offered a range of suggestions to better understand and address the issue. Project Manager Marcus Trotta noted that USGS staff could help clarify how the estimates were derived. Suggested considerations included the following:

- Clarify model assumptions, data inputs and calibration
- Note distinctions between initial and final estimates of agricultural pumping from USGS study
- Note that this is an initial modeling effort; future modeling will be based on greater data inputs resulting in a more reliable estimate

TAC Meeting Attendees

TAC Members

Kevin Cullinen
Matt O'Conner
Michael Burns
Jane Nielson
Bob Anderson
Mark Calhoon
Dawna Gllagher
Garrett Broughton
Rocky Vogler
Lloyd Iverson

Project Team

Project Manager, Marcus Trotta
Technical Consultant, Tim Parker
TAC Facilitator, Rich Wilson

TAC Visitors

Karl Adelman